

To: Senate Committee Health
From: American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists –
Wisconsin Section
Date: October 12, 2021
Re: Legislation to Restrict Access to Women’s Health Care



The Wisconsin Section of American College of Obstetrician Gynecologists (ACOG), an organization focused on providing quality, compassionate and often life-saving health care to women, strongly denounces the rhetoric that is being used to promote the bills before you today. Senate Bills 591, 592 and 593 spread false, dangerous information and undermine the public’s trust in OB/GYNs. These bills insert legislative interference in the patient-physician relationship and decrease access to preventative health care and constitutionally protected women’s health care, namely abortion care.

Senate Bill 591 would mandate that physicians provide information to patients which is not based on rigorous scientific evidence. If this bill becomes law physicians would be required to misled patients into believing that evidence-based treatment is available to “reverse” the effects of mifepristone. So-called “abortion reversal” regimens have not been adequately studied or evaluated for the safety of the mother or the fetus, and do not meet clinical standards of care. Legislative mandates based on unproven, unethical research are dangerous to women’s health. Politicians should never mandate treatments or require that physicians tell patients inaccurate information. Requiring doctors to offer a medical therapy that lacks the requisite evidence base is unethical at best and harmful at worst. We cannot allow political interference to compromise the care and safety of our patients.

Senate Bill 592 would require physicians to give legislatively mandated information regarding a fetal condition to a patient. It is the ethical responsibility of a physician, and indeed we take an oath, to provide patients with medically correct information to help them make their own informed choices regarding their diagnosis and based on their individual prognosis. It is not the place of politicians to interfere into the patient-physician relationship. Physicians have open, honest, and confidential discussions with their patients about the diagnosis, prognosis, and appropriate treatment options a patient may be faced with. Politicians should be looking to scientific data and the knowledge and experience of our excellent and compassionate physicians to be providing evidence-based, safe, and quality care to our patients.

We are additionally opposed to **Senate Bill 593** which represents gross interference in the patient-physician relationship. People seek abortion for many different reasons, which can be complex, and reflect a variety of considerations including her health, her family, and her future. OB/GYNs will tell you that some of the most difficult decisions are made by women whose pregnancies are affected by genetic disorders, and they are not taken lightly. This proposed bill stigmatizes women who seek abortion care by questioning the motivation behind their decisions; invites discriminatory profiling by doctors against our own patients; and discourages honest, confidential conversations between patients and their doctors. When health care providers must question their patients’ motivations for obtaining an abortion, some patients may feel forced to withhold information or lie to their provider—or they may be dissuaded from seeking care from a provider altogether. Such legislation not only restricts a woman’s constitutional right to access safe abortion, but it jeopardizes her ability to access accurate medical information and safe, timely and compassionate health care.

In closing, as the largest organization of women's health care providers, ACOG proudly stands behind our members who provide comprehensive health care for women, delivered with quality, safety, integrity, and compassion. The bills before us today create a dangerous and hostile environment for physicians and patients, and ultimately prevent doctors from providing a patient with the best possible health care.